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Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 IO-06 INR-05 PM-03 CIAE-00
NSC-05 NSCE-00 DODE-00 EB-04 OMB-01 TRSE-00 L-01 SP-02
PRS-01 USIA-01 /056 W
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R 101016Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4017
INFO AMEMBASSY KIGALI
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAR ES SALAAM 0623

LIMDIS/NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, ECON, EAIR, TZ, KE
SUBJECT: TANZANIAN CLOSURE OF BORDER WITH KENYA

REF: A) DAR ES SALAAM 0619, B) DAR ES SALAAM 0611

1. PRESIDENT NYERERE'S PUBLIC DISCUSSION (REF A) OF HIS RATIONALE FOR CLOSING THE BORDER WITH KENYA, AND IMPLICIT LINKING OF FUTURE RELAXATIONS TO SATISFACTORY RETURN OF TANZANIANS IN KENYA, MAY BEGIN PROCESS OF BUILDING DOMESTIC UNDERSTANDING FOR HIS PAST AND FUTURE ACTIONS. TANGOV HAS NOT YET ANNOUNCED ANY DEVIATIONS FROM "SEALING" OF LAND AND AIR BORDERS, WITH CONTINUED EXCEPTION OF INTERNATIONAL AIR LINES FLIGHTS.

2. VERY LIMITED MOVEMENTS ACROSS LAND BORDER DO SEEM TO BE TAKING PLACE. FOR EXAMPLE, SOME KENYA-REGISTERED PRIVATELY OWNED LAND VEHICLES (NOT TOURIST BUSES, TAXIS OR PUBLIC SERVICE
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VEHICLES) ARE BEING ALLOWED TO GO TO KENYA. TANZANIAN-REGISTERED LAND VEHICLES ARE BEING ALLOWED TO RETURN FROM KENYA TO TANZANIA. THESE MOVEMENTS ARE REPORTEDLY BEING ALLOWED BY LOCAL TANZANIAN OFFICIALS FROM MOSHI-ARUSHA AREA WEST ALONG BORDER WITH KENYA. IN CONTRAST, COAST ROAD FROM TANGA TO MOMBASA REMAINS TIGHTLY CLOSED ON TANZANIAN SIDE TO ALL PROSPECTIVE TRAVELERS.

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3. LOCAL SOURCES ESTIMATE THAT THE SOME 175 KENYA-REGISTERED LAND VEHICLES IMPOUNDED IN TANZANIA REPRESENT ONE MILLION DOLLAR INVESTMENT OF KENYAN TOURIST COMPANIES. TANZANIANS BELIEVE THESE KENYANS WILL BRING PRESSURE ON KENYAN GOVERNMENT TO MAKE CONCILIATORY MOVE TOWARD TANGOV IN REGARD TO DISPOSITION OF EAST AFRICAN AIRLINES ASSETS. THE REPORTED 28 KENYAN-REGISTERED AIR-CRAFT IMPOUNDED IN TANZANIA, WHICH MAY BE WORTH AS MUCH AS TWO MILLION DOLLARS, SEEM TO BE VIEWED BY TANZANIANS AS SIMILAR LEVERAGE. THOUGH KENYAN PILOTS AND DRIVERS ARE FREE TO RETURN TO KENYA (BY INTERNATIONAL AIR SERVICE) THEY THUS FAR HAVE BEEN RELUCTANT TO DO SO, FEARING THAT WITH THEIR DEPARTURE TANGOV MIGHT DECLARE THEIR IMPOUNDED MACHINES "FOREIGN REGISTERED PROPERTY ABANDONED BY OWNERS WHO HAVE LEFT THE COUNTRY", RENDERING RECOVERY EVEN MORE PROBLEMATICAL. WE ARE THUS FAR NOT AWARE OF ANY US CITIZEN INTEREST IN THESE LAND VEHICLES OR PLANES. BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION HERE IS STRUGGLING UNSUCCESSFULLY WITH TANGOV TO OBTAIN RELEASE OF IMPOUNDED KENYA-REGISTERED BRITISH CITIZEN AND CORPORATION OWNED VEHICLES AND AIRCRAFT.
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